Cornice, crown moulding and *coving*: types and sizing

Coving is a plain hollow, a cornice is built up and a crown is sprung across the corner. No standard fixes their size, so quote drop, projection and spring angle, and mock it up.

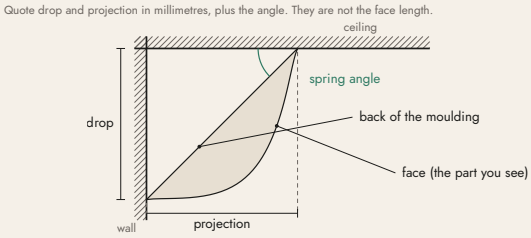
Compliance guidance. Fire and standards references are taken from the editions named, read in November 2026, and apply to England. This is guidance, not fire safety, structural or legal advice: building control and your fire engineer decide whether a cornice needs a class and what evidence is enough. Heavy cornices carry fixing and weight risks; take advice from the partner plasterer or joiner and the structural engineer where in doubt.

AT A GLANCE

Type	What it is	Usual maker	Strength	Watch for
Coving	A plain concave strip at the wall and ceiling junction	Plasterer, plasterboard or foam supplier	Simple, quick, cheap to repeat	Reads as plain; joints show in a long run
Run plaster cornice	Several elements built up, run in place from a template	Plasterer on site	Long crisp runs, no joints	Needs wet trade and time on site; corners are hand-formed
Fibrous plaster cornice	Cast in lengths and corners, then fixed	Plaster workshop	Period profiles, ornament, repeatability	Weight, fixing, joints to fill
Timber or MDF crown	A moulding sprung across the corner	Partner joiner	Crisp; timber is repairable, MDF paints evenly	Movement at joints; MDF fears damp
Polyurethane or polystyrene	Light foam moulding	Moulding supplier	Light; large or curved sections	Less crisp detail; fire evidence to ask for

General trade practice; a partner plasterer and joiner to confirm each cell.

MEASURE IT THE SAME WAY EVERY TIME



CARRYING A CORNICE TO ANOTHER CEILING

From a 100 mm drop in a 2.4 m room. Our arithmetic; assumptions in the sheet.

Ceiling	Same apparent size	Same fraction of height
2.4 m	100 mm	100 mm
2.7 m	105 mm	110 mm
3.0 m	115 mm	125 mm
3.6 m	130 mm	150 mm
4.2 m	150 mm	175 mm

CORNER ANGLES

Corner	Plain moulding	Sprung 45 degree, flat: miter / bevel
Square, 90 (internal or external)	45.0	35.3 / 30.0
Bay, 135 or 225 (internal or external)	22.5	16.3 / 15.7

Laid flat; external corners use the same figures, opposite hand. Cut a test corner.

FIRE CLASSIFICATION IN ENGLAND

Approved Document B (Vol 2 para 6.6) leaves architraves, cover moulds, picture rails and similar narrow members out of a ceiling. Cornices are not named: ask the fire engineer or building control. England only.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

CORNICE SCHEDULE LINE

Ref [C-01]: cornice, [stepped, run in place] plaster, section as detail [D-21] at 1:1, drop [100] mm, projection [110] mm. Colour and finish [ ]. Length joints, if any, as shown on [drawing]. Mock-up of one corner and one run in [room] to be approved before production. Classification evidence [required / not required] as confirmed by [fire engineer / building control].

SPRUNG MOULDING

Ref [C-02]: crown moulding, [timber / MDF], drop [100] mm, projection [100] mm, spring angle [45] degrees measured from the ceiling. Corners mitred, settings confirmed on site for each corner. Longest single length [ ] mm. Finish [ ].

TERMS USED

Cornice

A projecting moulding at the top of a wall where it meets the ceiling; it can be one element or several, in plaster, timber or other material.

Coving

A simple concave moulding at the wall and ceiling junction, usually plain.

Spring angle

The angle at which a crown moulding leans across the corner, measured here between its back and the ceiling.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- Approved Document B Volumes 1 and 2 (England), 2019 edition with amendments to 2026: Vol 2 para 6.6; Vol 1 para 4.6. Read Nov 2026.
- BS EN 13815:2006 and BS EN 15319:2007, fibrous plaster: Both Current, Under Review (BSI, 7 Nov 2026). Not read.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/cornice-crown-moulding-and-coving. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.